HOW THEY BUILD WORKHOUSES IN IRELAND.

For some time past I have contemplated the necessity of calling public attention to the auxiliary workhouses in Ireland. The late frightful catastrophes in the Killarney and Limerick Unions have impelled me to put my resolution in force, that public opinion may be awakened respecting those dens of disease and wretchedness, where thousands are crammed like negroes in the hold of a slave ship, without the smallest regard to the decencies and necessities of existence.

You must know that in Ireland, owing to the melancholy increase in the pauper population, the original workhouses have been found quite insufficient to accommodate the applicants for admission: the consequence is, these buildings, termed auxiliary houses, have been procured, into which the surplus poor have been stowed. It is with these I have to do. When such additional accommodation is required, the *modus operandi* is as follows:—The guardians advertise for premises, tenders are sent in; every one in the district having a dilapidated corn store, a ruined mill, or three or four tumble-down houses, brings them forward,—any place being good enough for paupers, and the cheapest in the eyes of the guardians being the best, a selection suitable to these ideas is made.

Do they seek professional advice as to the state of the premises, or their eligibility for the intended purpose? No such thing. In nine cases out of ten, suitable assistance is not sought; the master of the workhouse, the doctor, or some busy-body guardian, who fancies he knows something about buildings, are the only parties consulted. Upon their judgment is the concern turned into a workhouse; and alterations are made, involving large outlay, which, through the ignorance of those overseeing the matter, is completely thrown away. Sometimes the master of the union is the architect and inspector, who orders timber largely, and pockets the poundage; while those necessary adjuncts to health, light, ventilation, sewerage, and cleansing conveniences, are scarcely ever attended to.

Three, five, and seven hundred individuals are sometimes stowed into these rotten lofts, where there is scarcely more than room to stand upright. Nine out of every ten of these auxiliaries, in the south and west of Ireland, are corn stores, or old mills: every one knows what are the characteristics of these buildings. They are generally from four to six lofts high; the general height from floor to floor is 7 or 7½ feet; the apertures are few and small, in thick walls; the communication is from loft to loft by a step-ladder; sometimes a staircase is constructed, the general size and formation of which may be taken from the Limerick auxiliary, now infamous for the late melancholy catastrophe. Fancy one of these five lofts high, with a hundred beds on each loft: what a state of half suffocation they must exist in! consider they have no ventilation but what they get through the aforesaid windows, which at night must be closed up,—no escape for foul air, no admission for fresh,—and it will give you an idea of what disease and death are engendered in these Irish slaveholds. The medical reports of the unions will amply testify to the truth of my statement; but we count human life so cheap in Ireland, that these things are taken no notice of. Had the Killarney guardians availed themselves of proper advice, the paupers would not have been precipitated through the rotten lofts. The crushed and mangled remains of the Limerick victims will testify against the miserable and mistaken parsimony, that for the saving of an architect's fee, will entrust the providing and arranging of such edifices to ignorant and irresponsible parties.

Through you, Mr. Editor, I would call the attention of the Poor-law Commissioners, and all others concerned, to take instant measures for the prevention of such fearful calamities, as well as of the silent havoc that takes place, from the neglect of sanitary precautions, in the appropriation of these buildings to purposes they never were intended for. The appointment of travelling inspectors would be a good step, not young military officers, but intelligent, properly-qualified professional men, to report upon all such auxiliary houses, their present condition as respects soundness of construction and efficiency of sanitary arrangement, and to suggest and point out all necessary improvements, as also to report upon all places intended to be used for such purposes.

Indeed, the common sense of the matter would be to erect additional workhouses, and get rid of the separate staffs required for working these small houses (three and four of which are in some unions), as well as of the risk attending such bad and unsafe accommodation.

CORCAGIENSIS.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

A COUNTY court and police station is about to be erected at Stowmarket. Messrs. Rednall, Betts, and Andrews, of Stowmarket are the builders, under the direction of Mr. Frederick Barnes, architect. —— The contract for repairing the walls and roof of St. Michael's Church, Cambridge, has been taken by Messrs. Quinsee and Attack, at a sum of 1,300*l.* and upwards. The repewing and other alterations must form a separate contract. ——At an influential meeting at Oxford, resolutions have been passed in favour of the establishment of baths and washhouses there, and about one-third of the requisite sum (3,000*l.*) has been already promised.——The Salisbury directors of highways propose to adopt some means for a general improvement of the drainage of that city.——It is proposed to form a public Water-works Company at Winchester, with a capital of 15,000*l.*, in 750 shares of 20*l.* each; and to purchase the present works for 12,200*l.*——The contract for erecting the new Exchange, at Wolverhampton, has been taken by Messrs. Lilley, of Measham. The tenderers were—Messrs. Heritage, 6,465*l.*; Briggs, 5,262*l.*; Dickson, 5,110*l.*; Higham, 5,086*l.*; Cockerill, 5,050*l.*; Elliott and Ford, 4,997*l.*; Millington, 4,975*l.*; Hembrow, 4,646*l.*; Ede, 4,617*l.*; Hill, 4,481*l.*; Jarrow and Waterfield, 4,300*l.*; Green, 4,280*l.*; Watson, 4,187*l.*; Lilley, 4,045*l.*; Higgs, 3,990*l.*——It has been resolved by the wardens to rebuild the spire of St. Martin's Church, Birmingham. A subscription is, it appears, to be first tried, and one of the wardens, in announcing the circumstance in the local *Journal*, says, "By limiting our first effort to *the spire*, we by no means shelve *the general restoration* of the edifice. Should any friend who sends us one 5*l.* for the spire, send us another for the taking off the *brick* greatcoat by which the *stone* church of St. Martin's is kept warm, we shall not return his money.—P.S. The honour of sending the first 5*l.* is yet open to competition; and when some future *Hutton* records the restoration of the church (I beg pardon, the *spire*), he will surely not omit to add, 'Mr. or Mrs.— contributed *the first* five pounds.'"—— St. Peter's Church, Sackville-street, Everton, Liverpool, Mr. John Hay, architect, was to be opened on Thursday last. It is a Gothic edifice of the Decorated period. The length of the nave is 67½ feet by 26, aisles 73 feet, by 13½, chancel 38 feet by 21, chancel aisle, 21 feet by 14, vestry 13 feet square. The height of the nave to the ridge is 57 feet; the height of the steeple is 152 feet,—the tower of four stages, the last octagonal. The windows are tracerried, and are to be filled with stained glass. The building is of hard red sandstone, pointed with black mortar; the ridges of roofs finished with crest tile, of fleur de lis pattern. Interiorly the nave is separated from the aisles by pillars and arches of polished red sandstone. The floor is laid throughout with red and black tiles, the chancel and aisle with a tile from Minton's manufactory. The benches are all open, with kneeling and foot-boards, and all moveable, for convenience of cleaning. The organ is to be placed in the chancel aisle. The roof timbers are exposed, and are of varnished Baltic timber. There are appliances for heating and ventilation. The church contains about 1,200 kneelings, and will cost 4,100*l.*, exclusive of iron railing, on low wall around the building.——The sum of 1,711*l.* odd has been subscribed towards the erection of schools, for the dense district of St. John's, Liverpool, and a site has been secured in Great Crosshall-street, at a cost of 1,365*l.* The school building itself is to cost about 1,500*l.*——It is proposed to erect a church at Embsay, near Skipton, on a site given near the old foundation, laid in 1154. ——One of the town councillors of Bolton lately exhibited in council, a plan for a new market, proposed to be formed on a site near the centre of the borough, as laid down on the Ordnance map. On this plan, he said, there could be 314 shops, 22 lock-up shops, 98 stalls, 14 shops, and 36 stalls for fish; 10 shops and 32 stalls for butter, &c.; and 12 shops and 90 stalls for butchers, at a cost of 28,000*l.*; and the plan was one that could be extended. ——At Exeter, the new post-office in Queen-street, is nearly completed. It has attached columns of Corinthian, placed on a basement, slightly infirm in appearance (people say), from the great size of the central archway, and a large window on each side. An architect has not been regularly employed.

THE NEW METROPOLITAN SANITARY ASSOCIATION.

THIS influential and important association, lately formed at a meeting noticed in our columns, is already actively at work with the powers that be for the attainment of the beneficial and urgent ends for which it has been established. Since its formation powerful deputations have been in personal communication, first with Lords Carlisle and Ashley, as heads of the Board of Health, and still more recently with the Premier himself. At the interview with the latter, the Bishop of London headed the deputation, and submitted to Lord John Russell the resolutions passed at the initiative meeting, at which the old London, the Tower Hamlets, and Health of Towns Associations had merged into the new Metropolitan. The objects of the association were of course pressed on the attention of his lordship, as the Premier of her Majesty's Government and a highly influential member of the legislature; and the bishop's appeal was seconded by various other speakers, among whom were Messrs. Slaney and Wyld, M.P., the Rev. Dr. Cumming, Dr. Gavin, one of the secretaries, and others. The reply of the Premier was to the effect that the subject constantly engaged the attention of the Government, and that Lord Carlisle had been in constant communication with him upon it, — that the jealousy felt about interference with local rights, &c., presented difficulties in the way of the success of any one general measure, but that the best attention and the deepest interest of the Government were engaged in favour of separate measures that might secure the same end without the numerous risks of defeat on the separate clauses in any one general measure.

The association has since issued a circular, earnestly recommending the formation of branch associations in the various parishes or districts throughout the metropolis. Sub-committees for investigating various branches of the subject have been formed; and apartments are engaged at the Ship Tavern, Charing-cross, where attendance is given daily.

ORNAMENTED BRICK CHIMNEYS.—How is it that we seem entirely to have lost sight of that beautiful portion of old domestic architecture,—the ornamented brick chimney? Surely there is nothing more handsome than the examples at Hampton Court, Thornbury, Barnham, &c., and some few to be seen in the village of Audheyend, and elsewhere. Are there no districts in England where the clay is suitable, and yet where the stamped or moulded brick or tile would not answer the purpose of the speculator? In Staffordshire I have noticed an improvement, especially in the grand station at Stoke, but yet no attempt at the old pattern. Possibly I may only be recording my own ignorance; yet I have travelled much, and seen nothing modern of the kind, except in the Hall of Lincoln's Inn,—and there now successfully introduced: but those moulds were broken when the work was completed.—LINCOLNIENSIS.

*** Some were made recently on the estate of the Earl of Leicester, but we are not certain that their manufacture is continued. Let the tax on bricks be taken off, and art will then be applied in their manufacture.—ED.

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